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## Criminal charge related to affordable housing discussions

September 5, 2019

Dear Scott,

Earlier this year, I wrote to you about my discussions with a local developer, aimed at expanding affordable housing in Columbia, which led to my being accused of unethical conduct.

In [that newsletter](#), I acknowledged and apologized for my poor judgment in discussing the developer's offer of financial support for affordable housing in Columbia and my potential support for the project. City Council members should never decide to vote a certain way on the basis of a single factor, nor should any decision be made until the end of the relevant public hearing - in my eagerness to advance social equity goals in the community, I overlooked those important ethical standards. However, there would have been no benefit for me and I just did not realize I was doing anything wrong - when the City Attorney advised me a few hours later that the proposal may be illegal, I canceled it immediately and informed the Missouri Ethics Commission.

Today, I have learned that I will be charged with the Class C Misdemeanor of an "attempt" to commit a "prohibited act by an elected official." Although I made a serious error of judgment, I do not believe that my actions rise to the level of a criminal offense – therefore, I plan to plead "not guilty" to the charge and defend myself in court. As a constituent, I want you to hear this news directly from me, and I want to give you the opportunity to respond to me with your

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This issue was reported extensively in the media in February and I was re-elected to City Council in April. Nothing has changed since that time and no-one disputes the facts, which I laid out in that newsletter. I hope you will continue to support my efforts to improve access to opportunity for Columbia's most disadvantaged families with more affordable housing, better public transit service, and equitable development policies.

Cheers, Ian

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